

Understanding Your Obligation as a Citizen

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Titus 3:1-2

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Good morning and thank you for joining us for Redeemer Live. Social distancing is still in full effect and all the introverts think this is earth as it is in heaven. They've been preparing for this their whole lives and they've been probably loving every second of this. For as long as social distancing is in effect, we will be here every Sunday at 10:00 AM to bring you God's truth from God's word. You can stay connected to us on our website, on our Facebook page, YouTube and Instagram. On our website, you can give to the work that hasn't stopped here. We're still helping people know, love and serve Jesus and still advancing the ministry that God has been doing through Redeemer. Can I just say that, though? I miss being with you. If you're watching this and your part of Redeemer Bible Church, I love being with you. I miss that. There's just nothing quite like God's people gathering together. I'm looking forward to the day that we will be done with social distancing and we can all be back together again. Until that day, we want to stay connected to you as much as we can. If you haven't seen what we've been doing, we've been putting out daily videos called the Daily Word that is connected to our Bible reading plan. We're doing two episodes a week pretty much of our podcast, Redeeming Truth. We're also doing another prayer session on Facebook this Tuesday at 2:00 PM. It was incredible. Last week, 2000 or so people came to our last session, even people from the UK and New Zealand. If you'd like us to pray for you, or if you'd like to pray with us, join us on our Facebook page at 2:00 PM this Tuesday and join us here next Sunday at 10:00 PM for another broadcast of Redeemer Live.

Now let's pray and we'll jump into God's word. Father, even though I'm speaking through a camera, nothing can stop your word. Your word is more powerful than technology. Your word is more powerful than the medium. Nothing can stop it at all. I think of Paul's words that in 2 Timothy, that even though he was chained, that your word was unchained and no amount of social distancing, no amount of technology, no amount of live streams can stop the advancement of your truth. So I pray that you would accomplish great things through this broadcast and I pray the same thing for Center Church and Gilbert. I pray the same thing for Pastor Rich, that their broadcast this morning will be powerful, that you will use it to bless your people to honor Christ and that you will use it to see lost people come to him and be saved. Father, I pray for his sermon, I pray for mine now, I pray that you would use both of them in powerful ways as both of those sermons match your truth. That would be incredible evidence of your kindness for both of us and incredible evidence of your love for people. Do these things, I pray, in Jesus name, Amen.

At best, if you think about it, the church in America has a mixed reputation. Individual churches are doing good works all over the place and they're probably impressing a lot of people. However, overall, the church is not considered the good, stable, bright light that it should be in

our culture. Christians, if we're honest, we really aren't considered the kinds of people that most people want to be around. Now we can talk about why, an ever-increasing secular culture that's increasingly hostile to Christians. We can debate media bias. We can cringe over false teachers who present themselves as Christians when they really aren't. All of that has done damage for sure. Regardless, what is true is that our reputation as Christians isn't all that good. According to a survey done just four months ago in November, only 30% of Americans have a positive perception of Evangelical Protestant Christians.

See, now, many Christians at this point might think, "So what? Who cares? Who cares what people think about us? All that matters is what God thinks about us." But Proverbs 22:1 does say a good name is to be chosen rather than great riches. God said that in his word to his people. Our reputation matters as Christians. Now, we may not be able to change the culture's view of us, but we can affect the view of our neighbors. We can impact the way that they think about Christians. It might surprise you to hear that early Christian preaching, as summarized in the New Testament, was not limited to just telling people about how to be saved. It included practical instructions about how salvation should and certainly will impact the daily lives of Christians and God through Paul and Titus wanted Christian lives to have a positive impact. He wanted our lives to leave a favorable impression on other people, especially when those other people are non-Christians.

If you haven't done it already, grab your Bible and open to Titus chapter 3. Titus chapter 3. That is page 1100 if you have one of the blue Bibles that we give away. Titus chapter 3 is where you can see that this can happen, this positive, favorable effect, this powerful impact can be had on the lives of our neighbors, Christian and non-Christian, in our homes, at our jobs, at our schools and in our neighborhoods. That impact can be had in a lot of ways. But from our text, we are going to see that it will happen as we understand our obligations as citizens. We have obligations as Christian citizens in America. We are morally bound to a set course of actions if we were Christians. Every sphere of activity, every interaction comes with its own set of obligations, requirements, and responsibilities that we are held accountable for whether we do those obligations or not. Paul's been clarifying circles of responsibility and started in chapter 1 with the church and its leadership. He moved from there to chapter 2 to the home and personal relationships among Christians. Now in chapter 3, he's highlighting the Christian's obligation to society at large. See, all of us, we have obligations as individuals. We have further obligations as members of our families, depending on what role we have in that family. As Christians, we have obligations to love people, to pray for, to give, to serve and fulfill the ministry that God has given each of us in our local church. As Christians, we have obligations beyond that as students or as employers or employees. We have obligations as drivers, as customers, as renters or buyers, as neighbors. Listen, we have obligations as citizens of the United States. You might think of Christians or being American Christians, that places us above the state in some elevated, separated place where we're free from just about all the obligations from the state. After all, we serve Jesus as Lord, not the government. Now, while that's true, it's also true that there are actions Christians are morally obligated to perform as citizens of their country. To neglect, these

requirements is conduct that we will be held accountable for. Why? Because Jesus our Lord told us to do these things in his word. This message couldn't be any more timely as it seems to be coming on the heels of a debate that's been raging between Christians over the obligation to comply with the orders, not to assemble with more than 10 people, even for worship.

I read this week about churches in Arkansas and Louisiana whose pastors defied the recommendations of their state, not to meet with groups over 50, and in the case of the Arkansas church, at least three dozen people that were in that church service now test positive for the virus. The church in Louisiana has destroyed its reputation with its neighbors. The neighbors are quoted or saying that they're angry, they're frustrated because they could go to the store and run into people who are at those church services and get the virus because they refuse to stop meeting. Now, most churches aren't doing that. Most have shut down and they've shut down to love their neighbors and stop the spread. We've been asked in Arizona and in some states, churches have been mandated to shut down. There are threats that include losing the ability to receive disaster relief if it's asked for. Threats of citations, fines, criminal penalties, and even imprisonment. If that's the case, what should we do? Do we have an obligation to our government and to the larger society around us? The answer is we do and those obligations are clearly spelled out in Titus chapter 3:1-2, take a look at the text. God's word says, "Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient and to be ready for every good work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle and to show perfect courtesy towards all people."

Now, the Christian's first obligation is point #1) ***Obey Your Government., Obey Your Government.*** Look at how verse one starts. It starts with the word remind. This idea, in other words, is nothing new. Obeying the government must have been kind of Christianity 101, because Titus wasn't told to teach them this, he was to remind them. Really much of pastoral ministry is simply reminding people to do what they already know they need to do. Maybe the people on the island of Crete forgot, maybe they knew, but they ignored. The idea here is they knew this stuff. They just needed encouragement. They needed a refreshment of their memories. When you look at the background, Cretans were particularly rebellious people, so Titus was to keep reminding them to regularly put them under the weight of this obligation. He was to bring this to the center of their thinking about themselves as citizens. They were to obey the government. This is what the word be submissive is getting at. This word is used of soldiers under their commanding officer. It's the same word used in Titus 2:5 of husbands and wives. It's the same word in Titus 2:9 of first slaves and masters. It's the same word used in Luke 2:51 of children to parents and it's the same word in James 4:7 seven for Christians to God. In other words, submission is to be our regular response to the government. Listen to what Paul told the Christians in Rome, about 10 years earlier than the book of Titus. Romans 13:1 says, "Be subject." Same word as Titus 3:1. "Be subject to the governing authorities." Then he adds in verse 5 that Christians "must be in subjection to the government." Around the same time that Paul wrote Titus, Peter writes to Christians in modern Turkey. 1 Peter, 2:13. He says, "Be subject." Same word again. "Be subject to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor

as supreme or to governors as sent by him. We are to bring ourselves under the authority of our government." Notice the word be submissive is coupled in verse 1 with the words be obedient. Now this is a tricky word in Greek, all kinds of different ideas. Bottom line, it means to obey. Do what you're told. Comply with their demands. If submission is the attitude, obedience is the action. To be submissive to the government is to obey the government. Notice those words, rulers and authorities. That means any secular government official, whether federal, state or local, no exceptions, no qualifications, all of them, obey. The Roman government that these Christians lived under was religious and it was pagan. It was not friendly to Christianity. It was morally evil, despotic, oppressive, unjust, harsh, immoral and brutal. Paul and Peter both say obey. It doesn't matter if it's a democracy, a dictatorship, a monarchy, an aristocracy, an oligarchy, a republic, or some mixture of all of that. Christians are to obey them all. Their laws, all their regulations, all their taxes, all their requests, obey them all. To obey your government is to obey God who put that government in place to begin with and is obedience to God because he's the one who tells us to obey the government multiple times in the New Testament.

This is to be the regular, every day, normal attitude and action of all Christians to their government. Submission and obedience. Now, the key words I don't want you to miss in that last statement are the words regular, every day and normal. Obedience should be the typical life of the Christian. That's our obligation. That's not naive. That's biblical. However, that does not mean there are no exceptions to this rule and we need to discuss those. So yes, point number one, obey your government, but not unconditionally. Obey your government, but not unconditionally. Nowhere does the Bible teach unconditional obedience to the government. In fact, some of the most heroic moments in the Bible are acts of civil disobedience. Moses with Pharaoh, David was Saul. Both were very submissive, but both disobeyed their governing authorities.

Rahab lying about spy she was hiding in disobedience to the king of Jericho. She is praised for doing so in Hebrews 11:31. Daniel chapter 3, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to obey the law to worship a statue of Nebuchadnezzar, the most powerful man alive at that day, even though it was under threat of execution. Daniel chapter 6, a law's passed that no one can pray except to the king under penalty of death for 30 days. Daniel openly rebels, he's thrown into a cave occupied by a pride of hungry lions. He lives and verse 22 says that he was innocent. Acts chapter 5, Peter is rearrested for preaching. He's rearrested and he's brought before the same council that demanded that Jesus be executed. The high priest says to him, "We strictly charged you not to teach in his name. Yet here, you filled Jerusalem with your teaching, clearly disobedient to the governing authorities." Peter, however, and the other apostles answer, "We must obey God rather than men." Wasn't it Peter, the one who told us to obey the government? Is he being inconsistent? Is he a hypocrite telling Christians to do something that he didn't do as a young man? I don't think so. I can give more examples of heroic civil disobedience in the Bible, but my point is this, the Bible doesn't teach absolute obedience to the government.

Christian obedience to the government is not unconditional, absolute or blind. The principle we're seeing fleshed out as we take the Bible's entire teaching on the Christian's obligation to the

government is this; commanding obedience to the government never means treating the government like its God. When Jesus said render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and God the things that are God's, he planted the seed that became the first amendment and the separation of church and state. With that word and, Jesus created two spheres of authority. One belongs to the government, the other belongs to God. So he affirms, Jesus did, that the government has legitimate claims to people's lives and they should obey it and he affirms that God has legitimate claims on people's lives and they should obey him too.

Everyone should obey the government and everyone should obey God. However, that little word and, render the things that are Caesar's and things to God, that little word and means there are some things that don't belong to the government. While both the government and God have spheres of authority those spheres are not equal. Government is actually under God's authority, whether it recognizes it or not. Just ask the Ninevites. They didn't know the God of Jonah, but that didn't stop him from saying, "I'm going to destroy you for your disobedience unless you repent." Now, how many things fall under God's sphere of authority? Answer, everything, including human governments. Government has some authority over some things. God has all authority over all things. In fact, according to numerous passages in the Bible, it is God who gives government its authority. Listen to Romans 13:1. "There is no authority except from God and those governments that exist have been instituted by God." Verse 4 says the government is "God's servant." A government is to uphold God's standards. It is to do God's will, it will be held accountable to him as a steward of what God has given them, namely its authority. What we can conclude is this; Christians should always obey the government when the government places itself under God's authority, but Christians should never obey the government when it tries to take the place of God.

We never give the government blind, uncritical submission or obedience. There is boundary governments dare not pass and that boundary is worship. No one has absolute authority, no person, no organization, no government, no pastor, no church, nobody. God doesn't delegate absolute authority to anybody. When the government forbids what God commands or when a government commands what God forbids, we are to obey God rather than men as an act of worship. That, according to Exodus 1:21, "Fears God." In the case of Rahab, that is an act of faith. In the case of Daniel and Daniel 6:21, that is innocence. The people who disobeyed under the conditions we just looked at are never told they were in sin and they were always blessed. They were always looked up to as examples, as heroes. Oh, and don't forget that Paul and Peter, the two that told Christians that they should obey the government, they were both martyred in defiance of the Roman government that made Christianity illegal, even though they wrote that Christians should obey the government. Why? Because our obedience to the government is never unconditional.

So let me illustrate this by asking, well, what about the founding fathers? Many say our country was born out of disobedience to Titus 3:1, but I disagree. God raised up leaders in the Bible to

deliver his people from tyrants, from cruel oppressive, arbitrary, lawless, godless, rulers, God raised up Moses who disobeyed Pharaoh and God delivered his people from that tyranny. God raised up Judges to rescue his people from tyranny. The wise men disobeyed Herod's tyranny and went a different way, did not return back to Jerusalem the way that they were told to, and it was an angel that probably told them not to do that, to disobey Herod the king. Hebrews 11:33 says some heroes conquered kingdoms, which means that they used a military to overthrow a government and establish a new one. These are all examples of the idea that rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God because they all set themselves up in opposition to God. In other words, Christians should not work to overthrow their government for purely political reasons when that government is still under God. However, there is biblical precedent for working to overthrow one's government when it assumes the place of God, when that government stops being God's servant stops doing his will, when that government becomes God's rival.

Now, the founding father knew these biblical examples of rebelling against tyrants so they declared their independence from England to set up a government that was more in line with God's will as God's servant. Now, people can debate if they actually accomplished that, if their reasons were legitimate, was the king acting outside of his fear of authority? Was he really acting in the place of God? Was he really being a little God or wasn't he? I think after reading their list of grievances and the declaration that he was acting in the place of God, which is why I don't agree with the idea that the founding fathers sinned in the revolution. However, what the founding fathers did was not without biblical precedent. No government is to be given absolute, unconditional obedience. That is reserved for God alone. Now, having said all that, let's bring it down to where we are right now. Is the request from our federal state and local governments a violation of the first freedom of our right to the free exercise of Christianity? Are we being told we can't worship or live according to the dictates of Christianity? Are we being told that we can't peaceably assemble as a church? Are we violating Hebrews 10:25? Are we being forced by the government to disobey the Bible by not being able to meet together? Well, in a way we are, aren't we? I mean, think about it. Does our current situation with churches not allowed to meet in response to the virus, does that mean we've entered a situation where now we must obey God rather than men? I don't think so. I don't think we're anywhere near that situation actually and I want to give you three reasons why this is not a time for revolution.

The first reason is the duration of these restrictions. Is our inability to assemble, to meet peaceably as a church, is that permanent or temporary? See, Hebrews 10:25 says not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some. Not meeting had become a habit, which many Christians today have the habit of. Only come once or twice a month to church. That has nothing to do with for public health reasons, has nothing to do with love for others, which really leads to second reason, the motive of these restrictions. Is our inability to assemble motivated by the public good? Or is the motive anti-Christian? I mean, that's clear, right? This is not anti-Christian. You know how you know that? Because the third reason, the extent of these restrictions, is our inability to assemble broadly applied to all people and all religions, or are Christians the only ones being targeted? That's a laughable question. Mosques, synagogues, restaurant, bars, gyms,

all kinds of people are being told "Don't meet" to stop the spread of the virus. Listen, this is not even close to a time for civil disobedience. Is this inconvenient? Yes. Is this anti-Christian persecution? Absolutely not. This is not a dual for who are we going to be loyal to? This is not China where the state is God, allegiance is unconditional, meaning all Christians who submit to Jesus as a higher power are treasonous. That's not what this is. Christians there, they don't revolt. They don't riot. They are model citizens who obey happily until the government takes the place of God. They give their government their obedience, but they do not give the government their worship. That would be idolatry. Now, if that's ever demanded here, we may need to obey God rather than our government. Government doesn't like giving back power that it's taken. So we should be watchful and if things change, we maybe need to respond accordingly. But for now we should obey the government. It has the common good in mind by asking us or even telling us not to assemble. It has the common good in mind for now.

Now, look back at Titus 3:1, what does a Christian who's fulfilling his obligation as a model Christian look like? It says that he will "be ready for every good work." Notice that word ready. This isn't reluctance. This is constantly prepared to do any and every good deed that comes to our attention. No persuasion, no arm twisting, ready immediately to do good. These are activities. These good works are activities that promote the wellbeing, the happiness, the safety of the community, all the people who live and intersect with their lives. This forms a natural bridge from our obligation as Christians to the government, to our obligation as Christians to the people that are around us every day. These obligations, these good works are spelled out in verse 2. Speak evil of no one, avoid quarreling, be gentle and show perfect courtesy toward all people. So the Christian's second obligation in this text is point #2) ***Love Your Neighbors. Love Your Neighbors.*** Notice speaking, evil of "no one and showing perfect courtesy to all people." Christian or non-Christian, king or homeless, no distinction at all justifies being unloving. Your neighbor is anyone you come across. Anyone that crosses your path. This is Paul in Galatians 6:10. "As we have opportunity, when the opportunity arises, let us do good to everyone." But what does that look like?

There are two things in our text not to do and there are two things in this text that we must do. Few Christians need these reminders, but the Cretans did and we probably need them too in our age of rage. First, notice the text. It says speak evil of no one. The Greek word here is blaspheme. Don't dishonor a person with your words. Don't revile, don't insult, don't gossip about people. Don't slander them to their face or behind their back, and that includes the government. It does say no one, which means no one, not one person and after all the context is the obligation of Christians as model citizens of a specific government. In first Corinthians 4:12, it says we don't insult someone back when they insult us. Instead, we bless. We're to remain at peace and live in harmony with everyone which is seen in what Paul says next, second, Christians are to avoid quarreling. We must never be known for attacking other people, having a reputation for verbal or physical assault. Christian citizens should not be known for having a hair trigger, always confrontational. Instead, were to be, third, gentle. We don't insist on our own way. We don't insist on our rights. We don't demand what we deserve. We prefer others. We're willing to defer

to do good to others. This means that would there be times that we submit to injustice, when necessary, we accept hatred, we accept malice and showing patience and deep trust in God for any obedience to him, even when it's hard. Fourth, we're to "show perfect courtesy towards all people." This is the same word used as the fruit of the spirit and Galatians 5:23 and translated their gentleness, which makes it a little confusing because a different word translated gentle is right there in verse 2. The word translated here, courtesy, means being considerate, not pushing people around, not angry, unjust or harsh, not irrational, inflexible, self-promoting. It's genuinely considering how we talk and how we act and how that impacts the people we interact with. It's golden rule living, Matthew 7:12, whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them. Courtesy is treating people how you want to be treated and how much courtesy and how many people? What does the text say? Some courtesy towards some people? All or perfect courtesy towards some people, but not to others? Some courtesy to all people? Is that what it says? No. Perfect courtesy, all courtesy, all consideration to all people. No limit on how much and no distinction for how many.

In other words, we're back at Titus 2:12, God's grace transforms our lives and performs the impossible through our lives like verse 2 towards people described. Notice in chapter 2:12, he wasn't saying this to say like, okay, out in that community, there's going to be perfect people so this is going to be easy. No, look at the way that the Cretan society was described in verse 12. "Cretans are always liars, evil beasts, lazy gluttons." Look at verse 16. "The people there, they are detestable, disobedient unfit for any good work." This is not to be nice to those who are nice to you. This is not love those who love you back. No, and this is not call to being timid and passive, shy and bland, lukewarm as Christians. No, look at Titus 1:13. Titus was to rebuke people like this. Notice how he was supposed to do it. He was to rebuke them what? Does the text say? Rebuke them sharply. He was, verse 11, to silence the false teachers running around the island, causing all this conflict, the ones who are spreading all the false teachings and the ones who are encouraging sin, the ones who are tearing families apart. So is there conflict between what Paul tells Titus in chapter 1:13 and what he wants Titus to remind the Christians of in chapter 3:2? They're supposed to be courteous to all, but he's rebuking them sharply, silencing people, but yet he's supposed to be gentle with them. How do you put those two things together?

Again, we take the whole Bible, even the whole book of Titus into account, and we see that we are, to point number two, love our neighbors, but not naively. Love your neighbor, but not naively. Titus 3:2 doesn't mean don't confront sin. That doesn't mean we don't call out error and false teachers who are spreading it. That's the pastor's job and that's Christian's jobs. In fact, it is loving to confront sin and error. It is loving to confront false teachers and false teaching. It is not loving to stay silent. It is not loving to pretend like it's not happening just so that we can keep the peace. This text is about how we do that. Titus 3:2. Titus 3:2 is about how we do that, how we defend the truth, how we confront error. We don't slander. We don't attack people. We don't insult. We're not harsh. We don't ridicule them either. Whether we're calling out sin and false teaching, or just having a conversation with our neighbor, we're to speak the truth in love. In the words of second Timothy 2:24, we and especially pastors, we "must not be quarrelsome, but kind

to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting opponents with gentleness." Same word as courtesy, Titus 3:2. Correcting people without anger, without self-promotion, without ridicule. The same word as Titus 3:2 of courtesy is used in Galatians 6:1. "If anyone is caught in any sin, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness." Same word. In fact, these last two words in Titus 3:2 are used by Paul in second Corinthians 10:1 to describe Jesus as meek and gentle. But have you read a passage like Matthew 23? Matthew 23, he's calling out sin, he's over and over again piling it on. "You hypocrites, you hypocrites. You false teachers." He's calling out false teachers. He's calling out false teaching, but he's a model for that and yet he's gentle, kind, loving when he does so, and we should be too.

We must evaluate our lives. We must evaluate what we believe. We must evaluate what others believe in and how they live. We should, in the words of first Thessalonians 5:21, we should test everything, yet hold on tight to what is good. We have to evaluate things. Paul is not telling Christians to be naive, to believe the good in everything. He's telling us that our regular, natural, general demeanor and actions should be one of love for our neighbors and love for our neighbors sometimes may mean gentle confrontation and love for them and in love for the truth. Yes, giving people the truth is loving, but how you do that must be loving too. Being silent, condoning sin and false teaching is unloving and not being taught in Titus 3:2. At the same time, speaking the truth, but being a jerk about it, having a demeanor of anger towards those that you're seeking to reach for Christ, all of that is also in violation of Titus 3:2. Even when confronting the worst of sin, even when confronting the height of false teaching, we must never stoop to insult, arrogance, being combative, mean and harsh.

Christian, we need that message in the day of social media. Listen, we must become under control and considerate, while at the same time being truthful. James 1:20 puts it this way, "The anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God." Now, what's the result when we do this? What will happen when Christians understand and fulfill their obligations, both to the government and to their neighbors? Here's what will happen. The people we interact with according to Jesus in Matthew 5:12, those people will "see your good works and will give glory to your father who is in heaven." In other words, you will give Christianity credibility. People will begin to worship God because of the good works that they see coming out of your life. We can keep our conduct. We have to keep our conduct before the world honorable. So honorable, in fact, that even when people speak against us, first Peter, 2:12, "They will see your good deeds and glorify God in the day of visitation." When Jesus returns, when judgment comes, they will see the good that we did in the world and they will actually worship God for us because of what God used us to do in their lives. In other words, we should so live that everybody who's not a Christian is forced to say good things about us. Now, in saying that Paul is not concerned with our PR, he is not concerned with Christianity's public image. Paul is deeply concerned that the lives of Christians do not hinder the gospel. We are to live lives, Titus 2:7, as models of good works, as people, 2:15, who are zealous for good works, 3:1, who are ready for every good work and 3:8 who are devoted to good works. We are to do this, chapter 2:10, so that in everything we do at our jobs and everything we do everywhere else, so that in everything we adorn the truth.

We make the truth more attractive with lives that show people what the truth can do. We make the Bible, we make our God, we make Jesus look as wonderful as he actually is when our lives show the impact that he has on our lives. The goodness, the godliness of our lives, in other words, is missional. All our good works are to honor God, yes, but they also show the world what a saved and transformed life looks like. The world is watching how we respond to this virus. They're watching how we live in our homes. They're watching us at our jobs if we're able to go there, they're watching us on social media. What is it that they see?

In this time of chaos, let's support and obey our government, let's tangibly love our neighbors, let's be calm and under control. When we are, it shows the world that Jesus is better. It shows the world that he is real and he really changes lives like ours for the better, and then maybe, just maybe, the gospel will spread faster and farther than this virus.

Let's pray. God, that would be amazing. That would be amazing if your people would just embrace these truths, if I would just embrace these truths and you would use our lives to lift up the name of Christ. Yes, we need to give the gospel with our words, but the book of Titus, you seem to be saying over and over again that we beautify the gospel, we make the gospel look even better than this most incredible message that it is when our lives demonstrate the effect of the gospel. So all of us are in different places. All of us have different people in our lives. Many of us aren't even leaving our homes, but our family is watching. The people we're connected to on social media are watching. So help us please take our lives and use our lives to make Christ look great. Not because he isn't, but because he actually is and our lives can give proof of that. Do this, please, in each of us, I pray, for the glory of your name. Amen.